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Submission of Material for Publication

Interested parties are welcome to submit primary source material and journal articles for publication in *Muscogiana*. Submissions should either be printed on 8½ by 11 paper and mailed to the editor at the address listed below or saved as a Word document and emailed to sprayberry_gary@colstate.edu. To be considered for publication, material must be of cultural, historical and/or genealogical significance to the Columbus/Original Muscogee County, Georgia, area that consists of Harris County, Talbot County, Marion County, Chattahoochee County, and the current Muscogee County. All articles should be footnoted according to the *Chicago Manual of Style*, and should be 1000 to 5000 words in length. The Editor and the Editorial Board make final decisions on the acceptance of material for publication. Neither the Muscogee Genealogical Society nor Columbus State University can accept responsibility for errors or inaccuracies in material submitted for publication.

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Book reviews of both local titles and general genealogical monographs are accepted for inclusion in *Muscogiana*. Reviews should be 350-750 words, and should contain an overview of the work and an analysis on the value of the work to genealogists and other researchers in the region. The editor maintains a list of books for review, which is available on request.

Queries

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CONTENTS

COLUMBUS STATE
UNIVERSITY

From the Editor's Desk

The fall 2010 issue of Muscogiana features the work of the some of the most talented researchers and authors in the area. The first two pieces were contributed by Mike Bunn, the Curator of History at the Columbus Museum. In "A Picture is Worth a Thousand Words: Some Items from the Collection of the Columbus Museum," Bunn offers the stories behind three of the more prominent items at the museum, skillfully placing each in its proper historical context. For his second submission, "Columbus in 1839," he provides an excerpt from James S. Buckingham's *The Slave States of America*. Anyone who is interested in Columbus' formative years will want to pay special attention to Buckingham's work. It is quite illuminating. In the third piece, "Rescuing the Chattahoochee Valley's Forgotten and Neglected Cemeteries," John Mallory Land of the Chattahoochee Valley Cemeteries Society explains the origins and mission of his organization, offers wonderful information and advice on how to find and document neglected cemeteries, and provides a list of several gravesites in Muscogee County. In the final contribution, Jesse Williams offers a brief history (with supporting documents) of the Rock Island Paper Mill. I would like to thank Dr. Virginia Causey of Columbus State University for her help editing this issue.

Once again, I invite readers to send in their submissions. We need good book reviews, articles, queries, primary sources, and genealogy for upcoming issues. If you are working on something, please send it to: Gary S. Sprayberry, Department of History & Geography, Columbus State University, 4225 University Avenue, Columbus, GA, 31907. Or you can send an electronic copy to me at sprayberry_gary@colstate.edu.

Gary S. Sprayberry

Editor

On the Cover:

The Embryo Town of Columbus, 1828
From *Forty Etchings, Made with the Camera Lucida,* by Basil Hall, 1829
Courtesy of the Columbus Museum
(Columbus Museum purchase made possible by the Evelyn S. and H. Wayne Patterson Fund)

A Picture is Worth a Thousand Words: Some Items from the Collection of the Columbus Museum

by

Mike Bunn

Founded in 1953, the Columbus Museum has a dual mission to interpret American art and regional history for the education, enrichment and enjoyment of a broad and diverse public. In support of these goals, it maintains a dynamic and growing collection of historical objects that help it interpret the history of the lower Chattahoochee Valley region of Georgia and Alabama. Ranging from paintings and prints to tools and weapons, each item has a unique story that reveals fascinating details of our community's rich heritage. The following short essays explore the stories associated with three of these objects.

I. Basil Hall and the First Image of the City of Columbus

On a spring day in 1828, retired British naval captain Basil Hall stood in a small clearing along the eastern bank of the Chattahoochee River and pondered the prospects of the town that was allegedly to be carved from the wilderness around him. Hall, traveling with his wife and child as a sort of professional adventurer, had come to Georgia as part of an extended exploratory journey throughout the United States. During his trek he planned to observe America's landscape and society and publish an illustrated record of his journal upon his return to England.[1]

Hall listened attentively as his guide boisterously referred to the spot on which he stood – a narrow lane among the pines and oaks marked off by surveyors' stakes – as the very center of the future city. Looking around, he and his companions could eventually discern the series of roughly

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[1] For biographical information on Hall, see John Burke, *The Royal Families of England, Scotland, and Wales, with Their Descendants, Sovereigns and Subject.* (London: E. Churton, 1851), John Martine and E.J. Wilson (ed.) *Reminiscences and Notices of Ten Parishes of the County of Haddington* (Haddington: William Sinclair, 1894), Sidney Lee, *Dictionary of National Biography: Index and Epitome* (London: Smith, Elder, and Company, 1903). Hall's publications include *An Account of a Voyage of Discovery to the West Coast of Corea, and the Great Loo-Choo Island* (Philadelphia: Abraham Small, 1818), *Extracts from a Journal Written on the Coasts of Chili, Peru and Mexico, in the Years 1820, 1821, 1822* (Edinburgh: Archibald Constable and Company, 1824).

hewn paths branching off into the woods from the main lane that were to become the streets of the town. All around could be heard the sound of hammers, axes, and saws, as settlers and speculators began the labor-intensive process of clearing the land. Hall pulled out his camera lucida, a cutting-edge device that functioned as the camera of its day, and prepared to record in visual form the birth of a city. [2]

Though somewhat doubtful as to the prospects of survival for this "embryo town," Hall carefully chose the best vantage point from which to record a likeness of this "very curious place."[3] He had seen a good deal more of the world than most men of his day by the time he visited Georgia, and as a result of his experience writing books based on his travels he knew innately how to best represent such a tumultuous beginning. As the prism in the camera lucida reflected the scene he beheld in front of him for tracing, Hall carefully began creating the first known view of the city of Columbus.

The finished image (see cover) Hall produced that day first appeared to the public in *Forty Etchings, Made with the Camera Lucida*, an image-based companion volume to his narrative *Travels in North America*, in 1829. Its simple nature belied the turmoil and commotion of the scene it portrayed. Creek Indian title to the area in which Columbus lay had only recently been extinguished through the Treaty of Indian Springs, and the state of Georgia had hurriedly offered this land for sale to its citizens via a lottery. The state reserved a five-mile square parcel along the falls of the Chattahoochee in order that a city could be established.[4] For reasons that remain unclear to this day,

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[2] Though patented in 1806, the camera lucida was essentially an advanced version of a device invented by Johannes Kepler almost two hundred years earlier. The camera utilized a prism to reflect a scene onto a drawing surface in a way that allowed the artist to see both his subject and the drawing surface simultaneously. This technique allowed the scene to be "traced," facilitating a remarkably accurate representation.

[3] Basil Hall, *Travels in North America, in the Years 1827 and 1828* (Edinburgh, 1829), p. 283 and 280.

[4] For more information on the founding of Columbus, see Roger Harris, *Our Town: An Introduction to the History of Columbus, Georgia* (Columbus: Historic Columbus Foundation, 1992), Clason Kyle, *Images: A Pictorial History of Columbus, Georgia* (Norfolk: The Donning Company, 1986), John Lupold, *Columbus, Georgia 1828-1978* (Columbus: Columbus Sesquicentennial, 1978), Joseph B. Mahan, *Columbus: Georgia's Fall Line Trading Town* (Northridge: Windsor Publications, 1986), John H. Martin, *Columbus, Georgia, From Its Selection as a Trading Town in 1827, To Its Partial Destruction by Wilson's Raid in 1865* (Columbus: Thomas Gilbert, 1874), Nancy Telfair, *History of Columbus, 1828-1928* (Columbus: Columbus Office Supply Company, 1928), Margaret Laney Whitehead and Barbara Bogart, *City of Progress: A History of Columbus, Georgia* (Columbus: Cosco Press, 1979), Lynn Willoughby, *Flowing Through Time: A History of the Lower Chattahoochee Valley* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1999), and Etta Blanchard Worsley, *Columbus On the Chattahoochee* (Columbus: Columbus Office Supply Company, 1951).

the legislature chose to name this planned city "Columbus." After the survey of the town site, its lots were to be sold at auction.

Aware that he had arrived a short time prior to this momentous event, Hall noted that "every thing indicated hurry" in the mad rush for a share of this land of opportunity.[5] He observed dozens of houses of assorted sizes and in various states of construction scattered around the area, many actually built on wheels so that they could be moved to the appropriate spot once ownership of each lot had been determined. He noted several rude business establishments already springing to life as he explored the town site, including one hotel whose sign was nailed to a tree that had been left standing in the middle of one of the undeveloped streets. Everywhere stood the stumps of trees recently felled. It was a chaotic, and certainly modest, beginning for a city.

Hall's image and account of his experience in Columbus have served as invaluable reference sources for generations of people interested in learning about the city's origins. Almost two centuries after their creation, they remain among the most definitive and compelling accounts of Columbus' birth. What Hall learned about the progress of the city before his death in 1844 is uncertain; in his *Travels* he expressed regret that he had not heard anything about the further development of Columbus since the day of his visit. He surely would have marveled at just how well this "strangely concocted town" developed within a short period of time and to what degree it eventually prospered.[6]

II.   C.R. Parker's Portrait of Ann Elizabeth Lewis Wynn[7]

Noted itinerant artist C.R. Parker first arrived in Columbus in the summer of 1838 in hopes of a short but profitable stay in the young city.[8] Having obtained a studio space in an unused former

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[5] Hall, p. 284.

[6] Ibid., p. 287.

[7] A few years ago I contributed to Muscogiana an article on some of the more prominent itinerant artists to have visited antebellum Columbus, in which I explained their techniques and provided some brief biographical information on the subjects of several surviving portraits. This is an account of the creation of one of the most remarkable portraits produced by an itinerant in our city. It is now in the collection of the Columbus Museum. See Mike Bunn, "Artist for Hire: The Legacy of Itinerant Artists in Columbus, Georgia," Muscogiana, 17 (Spring, 2006).

[8] *Columbus Enquirer*, August 2, 1838.

schoolroom, Parker immediately advertised his services in the local paper and prepared to receive customers. Parker was a veteran traveling artist, and he well knew the routine about to be reenacted over the coming weeks.[9] Citizens who wished to have a portrait of themselves or a loved one would typically come to his temporary studio – often through a word-of-mouth system of referral – for a sitting. On special occasions, he also traveled to the homes of his subjects to produce a portrait. In either case, the encounter was necessarily a brief one. In simplest terms, the more portraits an artist painted during a short stay in a given city, the more profits he realized. Hence, Parker churned out portraits that were often amazingly similar in terms of costume, pose, and setting, for most of his customers judged his work on the details of the subject's face only. Parker had formed a network of connections throughout the South as a result of similar travels by the time he visited Columbus, and he no doubt arrived with at least a few commissions already promised. During his first stay in the city, he painted portraits of at least a dozen prominent Columbus citizens.

C.R. Parker ranks among the most prestigious of itinerants to visit Columbus in its early years, and he had already acquired quite a reputation by the time he arrived on the banks of the Chattahoochee. Born in Connecticut in 1799, he had trained in New England and, by 1825, had found work in the bustling port city of New Orleans.[10] He must have made quite an impression in short order, for the next year he received a commission to paint portraits of famous Americans from the

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[9] Though there is an impressive amount of antebellum itinerant artists' work in the holdings of museums and private collections throughout the South and nation, there are few academic studies of itinerants in the region. The most focused writings are the exhibition catalogs written by Estill Curtis Pennington: *Down River: Currents of Style in Louisiana Painting* (Gretna: Pelican Publishing, 1991), *Look Away: Reality and Sentiment in Southern Art* (Spartanburg: Saraland Press, 1989), and *Messengers of Style: Itinerancy and Taste in Southern Portraiture, 1784-1867* (Greenville: Greenville Museum of Art, 1993). Also, see Patti Carr Black, *Art in Mississippi, 1720-1980* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1998), Marion C. Bright, *Early Georgia Portraits, 1715-1870* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1975), Bruce Chambers, *Art and Artists of the South: The Robert P. Coggins Collection* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1984), Randolph Delehanty, *Art in the American South: Works from the Ogden Collection* (Baton Rouge: LSU Press, 1996), and William H. Gerdts, *Art Across America: Two Centuries of Regional Painting, 1710-1920* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1990), and Donald D. Keyes, *George Cooke, 1793-1849* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1991). For information on artists that visited Columbus specifically, see Mike Bunn, "Artist for Hire: The Legacy of Itinerant Artists in Columbus, Georgia," *Muscogiana*, 17 (Spring, 2006): 17 and William W. Winn, Karol Ann Peard Lawson and Frank T. Schnell, Jr., *Building on a Legacy: The Columbus Museum* (Columbus: The Columbus Museum, 1996).

[10] The great majority of biographical information about Parker in books or in current museum collections files states that he was born in England and died sometime after 1848 after leaving New Orleans. Though the results of their research are currently available only on an art history reference website (http://www.askart.com), years of intensive research by Sibley Jennings, Jr. and Robert Overby have resulted in a more accurate understanding of his life. The biographical information presented here comes in large part from Sibley Jennings, Jr., "C.R. Parker and Stephen F. Austin," an unpublished manuscript in the Columbus Museum files.

Revolutionary Period for the Louisiana Capitol. He honed his skills during an extended stay in Europe from 1828 to 1832, where he exhibited with London's Free Society of Artists and became good friends with renowned naturalist John James Audubon. Upon his return, he re-established the studio in New Orleans that would serve as his base of operations for the remainder of his professional life. Among the most prolific of southern portrait artists of his time, Parker's work today is part of the collections of museums across the South and nation.

Though he certainly could not have foreseen the position Parker would eventually occupy in the history of southern portraiture, a leading Columbus citizen, William L. Wynn, recognized his talents and commissioned him to paint a special portrait of his only child, four-year-old Ann Elizabeth Lewis Wynn. Wynn, born in Virginia, had moved to Georgia with his family as a young man.[11] He settled in western Georgia after his marriage to Ann Eliza Lewis in 1828, and shortly after purchasing land in the auction of lots in the Coweta Falls Reserve from which Columbus was carved, he made his home in the new city. Wynn quickly became influential in the area's early development, and by 1838 owned well over 1,500 acres of land in Muscogee County. Active in local civic affairs, he served a term in the state legislature and helped found Wynnton Academy.

Wynn built the house located across Wynnton Road from the Columbus Museum, originally known as "Oakview," in the early 1830s. During Wynn's ownership, it became a popular gathering spot for prominent Columbus citizens and the site of community celebrations such as Fourth of July barbecues. In time, the suburban neighborhood that grew up around his Greek Revival-style home on the edge of town, still under construction at the time of Parker's arrival, would become known collectively as "Wynnton" in his honor.

As was the case with so many of the early inhabitants of Columbus, though, Wynn's stay proved bittersweet and temporary. Medical technology of the day was primitive by modern standards, especially in frontier communities like Columbus, and as a consequence the people of Wynn's day were perhaps even more aware of the fragility of life than succeeding generations. In an

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[11] Biographical information on Wynn and information on the history of the Wynn House taken from the research files at the Historic Columbus Foundation.

unfortunately all too common phenomenon of the time, his beloved wife Ann Eliza, for whom his

daughter would be named, died tragically during childbirth. Wynn persevered in his adoptive home

for another fifteen years before moving west with his daughter. He moved to Louisiana around 1849,

and lived the remainder of his life on his "Georgia" plantation near New Orleans. How closely the two

identified with Columbus is perhaps best revealed by the fact that Ann Elizabeth returned to the city

in 1856 to be married in the home of friends by the rector of Trinity Church.

Fig. 1. *Ann Elizabeth Lewis Wynn*, 1838, by C.R. Parker
Courtesy of Columbus Museum
(Columbus Museum purchase made possible by the Daniel P. Amos Acquisition Fund)

Parker's portrait of Ann Elizabeth (see Figure 1) is unique among known examples of his

work. It captures a stunningly vivid likeness of her in a way that conveys a vitality that is frankly not

present in most of his other pieces, or in the work of other contemporary itinerants. To be sure, the

painting successfully achieved everything portraits of the day served: as symbols of self-expression and family pride, validations of social status, and, above all, as memorials. Young Ann Elizabeth appears youthful and healthy, full of promise and worthy of the effort and expense requisite for the portrait. Created in a day when recording such a scene was truly an expensive undertaking that demanded a skilled professional, the portrait stands as testimony to the aspirations, as well as resources, of its subject and commissioner.

On a more overtly symbolic level, the portrait beautifully communicates notions of experience, time, and place in a subtle yet alluring fashion. The girl holds in her hand a mourning dove, likely a reference to her deceased mother since mourning doves were widely understood to be symbols of love, peace, and remembrance. The dog at her side probably represents faithfulness and fidelity, as this interpretation would have been commonplace in art of the period. In clothing and hairstyle, she appears distinctly vogue.

Of equal significance to those interested in Columbus history, the painting depicts a rare period view of an area which is currently part of the heart of the city. The scene was apparently painted on the crest of Wynn's Hill, just in front of the still-extant Wynn house, in what is today the Columbus thoroughfare of Wynnton Road. Today, the Columbus Museum stands in the location just to the right. In the background, beyond the road leading to downtown Columbus, can be seen the hills of the Alabama side of the Chattahoochee River. As both a piece of art and a visual record of a time, place, and lifestyle, Parker's painting is a fascinating glimpse into a formative era in Columbus' past.

III.   The Steamboat *Rebecca Everingham*

The Columbus *Enquirer Sun* boldly proclaimed the *Rebecca Everingham* "the finest boat that floats south of the Mason and Dixon Line" shortly after she began her service on the Chattahoochee.[12] It was hyperbole, of course, but the boat certainly compared favorably with any

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[12] Columbus *Enquirer Sun*, November 6, 1880.

other operating on the river during her time. Beautiful, spacious, and stately, it has become one of the most celebrated to have ever plied the river.

Fig. 2. Lithograph of the *Rebecca Everingham*
Produced by the Calvert Lithographic Company, ca. 1880
Courtesy of D. Neal Wickham

Public fascination with the *Rebecca Everingham* (see Figure 2) actually began before she was even launched. As she underwent construction in Columbus in the summer of 1880, a local journalist noted with enthusiasm that it was growing increasingly obvious that she would be "a model of beauty and neatness." When she was finally launched on August 27, the occasion was accompanied by

appropriate flourish.[13] As she slid into river at the conclusion of a two-hour long launching ceremony, her captain christened her by breaking the traditional bottle of wine on her hull. Despite the fanfare, her maiden voyage could not have been much of a real nautical experience for the small group of passengers invited aboard for the occasion since her engines had yet to be installed. Not until November was she completely fitted out and ready for service.

Once finished she was truly a sight to behold. She measured 140 feet in length and thirty feet wide, yet drew less than two feet of water. As close to a western river floating palace as Columbus would see, her spacious cabin of white pine contained over two dozen staterooms "elegantly furnished and carpeted," and her hall featured imported furnishings, chandeliers, and a well-executed interior faux-finish paint that gave the appearance of polished marble.[14] She boasted a capacity of well over 120 passengers and could carry an impressive 1,000 bales of cotton, all of which could be moved along at an average speed of seven miles per hour by two powerful high-pressure steam engines turning a paddlewheel thirteen feet in diameter. On the cutting edge of technology and refinement for the day, she carried cork life preservers and had an electric searchlight mounted on her bow to illuminate her path at night or in heavy fog. She received her name in honor of Rebecca Everingham Wadley, the wife of Colonel William L. Wadley, owner and president of the Central of Georgia Railroad.

She made her true maiden voyage in November 1880, in the process becoming one of over two hundred steamboats that tried the waters of the Chattahoochee. Steamboats were once a primary means of transportation in the region, facilitating travel and trade over a wide area in relatively quick and efficient fashion. They played a major role in the development of the region by connecting Columbus and the surrounding area to world markets through the port of Apalachicola on the Gulf of Mexico. At one time, Chattahoochee Valley cotton helped Apalachicola become the third largest port on the Gulf, behind Mobile and New Orleans. The increasing proliferation of rail lines in the region in the second half of the nineteenth century steadily diminished the profits that could be

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[13] Columbus *Enquirer Sun*, July 28 and 29, 1880.

[14] Columbus *Enquirer Sun*, November 6, 1880.

made through the operation of steamers, however, and within a few decades of the launch of the *Rebecca Everingham* the boats were on the verge of extinction. Hers was the last great era of steamboating on the Chattahoochee.

It is fortuitous that a rare lithograph advertising the boat survives in a local private collection.[15] It was produced shortly after the boat entered service, and provides a surprisingly detailed look at life aboard a river steamer. Capturing the boat in its heyday, the print depicts her underway with a generous load of cargo. The absence of cotton, the boat's primary down-river cargo, means this was either an upriver trip carrying goods from Apalachicola to Columbus or a generic representation of how she may have appeared with a full hold. A number of well-dressed passengers relax on the two upper decks customarily reserved to such clientele, while a number of deckhands are depicted below at both work and leisure. With heavy smoke belching from the high stacks as she powers into a stiff headwind that holds her flag, ensign, and banner out straight, she is the epitome of the elegance proclaimed in the text below the image. Even passers by, in a small rowboat, have paused to take a look and hail those lucky enough to be on board. Looking carefully, one can see their wave is being returned.

Nineteenth century color lithograph production, known as chromolithography, was a tedious and expensive process that required an expert's hand and a gambler's boldness to make it profitable. A brief outline of the production process used to create the image helps us grasp its importance and appreciate its accuracy.[16] Artists began by drawing an image with a grease crayon on a piece of finely polished limestone, the best and most widely used being a certain variety found in Germany. They then washed the surface with a special solution of gum arabic and nitrate acid to set the grease. Next, the stone was washed with water and ink was applied. Paper was then laid onto the stone surface and pressed; the ink adhered only to the grease drawing, thus leaving a transferred

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[15] The print is in the collection of Mr. D. Neal Wickham. For several years, t has been on display as a loan in the permanent history gallery of the Columbus Museum.

[16] For an overview of the process used to create chromolithographs and brief sketches in the overall development of the technique as well as brief histories of major American lithography companies, see Peter C. Marzio's *Chromolithograhy 1840-1900: The Democratic Art: Pictures for a 19th-Century America* (Boston: David R. Godine, 1979).

impression. A different stone was required for every color in the finished image, with the paper being pressed, first by hand and later by steam-powered presses, against each. By the late 1890s, there were over fifteen different specializations among the laborers who produced lithographs in some of the larger concerns. Obviously, precise alignment and uniformity were required throughout production, and the cost of equipment and supplies made it imperative that lithographers produce prints that would sell.

Although Americans had a voracious appetite for color lithographs in the late-nineteenth century, they were finicky in their tastes and careful with their wallet. Only well-executed, affordable prints of desirable, intriguing, or noteworthy scenes could be counted on to sell. As time progressed and competitive marketing in a consumer economy assumed increased importance, lithographers gradually began to be asked to produce more marketing than decorative art for use in homes. How many copies of the print of the *Rebecca Everingham* were sold and how many were given away by the Central Line or through arrangement with retailers is unknown. It is clear, though, that the print represents in dramatic form how much appreciation of the bottom line had influenced lithographers by the 1880s. What once traditionally involved only the reproduction of high art had been transformed into a marketing medium that would eventually influence the advertising of everything from canned vegetables to automobiles.

This particular lithograph was produced as an advertisement by the Calvert Lithograph Company of Detroit, one of the larger American lithographers of the time.[17] Thomas Calvert, a native of England who had worked in the railroad, engraving, and lumber businesses prior to arriving in the Midwest in the 1860s, founded the company. Rising from humble beginnings, Calvert by 1892 could boast of employing over three hundred workers operating nearly seventy-five steam and hand presses. The company had sales offices throughout the country. Advertising posters such as the one

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[17] Information on the Calvert Lithograph Company taken from Marzio, *Chromolithography*, Jay T. Last, *The Color Explosion: Nineteenth Century American Lithography* (Santa Ana, CA: Hillcrest Press, 2005), Jennifer Reed Williams, "Color From Stone," in *Michigan History* (January/February 1986), and the subject files of the Detroit Public Library.

shown were a specialty of Calvert's in the 1880s, but the company managed to change with the times, surviving as an independent establishment until after the Second World War.

The end of the *Rebecca Everingham* came in dramatic fashion on April 3, 1884. As the boat approached Fitzgerald's landing about forty miles below Columbus near four o'clock in the morning, some of its cotton cargo caught fire. Reports differ as to the exact cause of the blaze. Some believed it may have been started by a smoldering bale of cotton that had been rescued from an earlier fire, while others pointed to "a falling particle of carbon from an electric light."[18] Whatever the cause, the blaze spread rapidly and the boat was soon engulfed in flames that ominously lit the night sky.

Pilot George Lapham immediately steered her for the shore while passengers and crew set to work trying to assist those aboard to safety.[19] In the confusion, people made their escape any way they could, and witnesses reported seeing one woman jump from the upper deck into the cold river and another hold desperately to the stopped paddlewheel. One passenger, having announced his premonition of a disaster that night, is reported to have slept with his clothes on and belongings nearby. Once the alarm was given, he was among the first to evacuate the boat. At least a dozen others were not so lucky. Four passengers and eight deckhands were either burned to death or drowned in the disaster. Within thirty minutes the boat burned to the waterline and quietly sank a short distance downstream.

The *Rebecca Everingham* immediately passed into legend. She secured a place in local lore that would cause her to forever be associated with a grand era in regional history in which the Columbus and the Chattahoochee were symbiotically intertwined. With only minor interruptions, the boat had served four years continuously before the hazards of river navigation caught up with her, a surprisingly average life span for boats of her type. Yet she was anything but an average boat, and had captured the imagination of local citizens as few others. News of her tragic demise spread rapidly across the region and nation; even the *New York Times* carried a story on her destruction.[20] In the

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[18] *Columbus Enquirer Sun,* April 4, 1884; *New York Times,* April 4, 1884.

[19] Ibid.

[20] *New York Times,* April 4, 1884.

mid-1990s, a commemorative stamp was issued by the United States Postal Service in her honor, introducing her to a new generation of people intrigued by the steamboat era. Today she remains a representative of a bygone relationship with the river that still charms and allures as much because of its grandeur as its fragility.

Columbus in 1839:
An Excerpt from James S. Buckingham's *The Slave States of America*

Edited by

Mike Bunn

From January to June of 1839, renowned English author and celebrated world traveler James Silk Buckingham toured the states of South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi and Louisiana in preparation for a grand narrative of a journey "through that portion of the North American republic, in which the institution of slavery still exists, and to which, its supporters and defenders still cling, with a tenacity as much to be deplored as it is to be wondered at."[1] Acclaimed for his travel writings detailing astute cultural and political observations in such diverse places as India, Canada, and the Middle East, Buckingham enjoyed a worldwide audience and had already penned two volumes focusing on American society in the northern states by the time of his visit to the South.

Buckingham had become an outspoken opponent of slavery – an institution he deemed ill-suited to the enlightened age in which he lived. In seeking specifically to explore the state of slavery in the American South, he hoped to expose, in a manner displaying "fairness and equity," the "wretched condition of the great body of the African race throughout the South; and of the reckless indifference to human life."[2] When finally published in 1842, however, the book, *The Slave States of America*, evidenced as much sarcasm and condescension as it did fairness or equity. Still, it revealed Buckingham to be a careful observer with an uncanny knack of taking the true temperature of the regions he visited, and it showed him to be a meticulous researcher who provided remarkably accurate details of events.

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[1] From the preface of James S. Buckingham's *The Slave States of America* (London: Fisher, Son, and Company, 1842).

[2] Ibid.

It is both ironic and revealing that Buckingham's comments on his brief stay in Columbus focused less on the institution of slavery than on the sordid history of Indian removal in the surrounding region.[3] The saga of the signing of the treaty by which the Creeks relinquished claim to the area and were subsequently swindled out of property in Alabama promised to them by Columbus-based speculators is a sad but significant one in local history. In simplest terms, the removal of the Creeks facilitated the migration to the region of American planters and their slaves, helping to expand the plantation economy across the Chattahoochee Valley. Buckingham's attention to this developing situation—still being sorted out at the time of his visit—captures the spirit of the times and brings to our attention the troubled circumstances surrounding Columbus' formative years as a frontier community. The portrait he paints is not flattering. He found it a crude place that contained many citizens complicit in one of the most shameful episodes in national history. Nevertheless, Buckingham's account of Columbus in 1839 provides an intriguing glimpse of the city during its infancy and helps us understand some of the issues that influenced the course of the region's development. An edited version of his account from is included below.

The following is excerpted from Chapter 34 in *The Slave States of America*:

"It is not more than eleven years since the first house in Columbus was built, yet there is now a population of about 4,000 persons, of whom 3,000 are whites and 1,000 blacks and coloured people; the fewness of the latter, in comparison with most of the Southern towns, arises from the fact that it is not so much an agricultural place as Montgomery, Macon, or Augusta, but chiefly commercial, and its principal residents are adventurers from the New England States."[4]

"There are five churches in Columbus, the Episcopal, Methodist, Presbyterian, Baptist, and Roman Catholic; they are each small, and neither of them has a congregation exceeding 200. A wretched theatre, recently established, and said to be as wretchedly supplied with actors, is better

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[3] The account of Buckingham's visit to Columbus is found in pages 510-528 of the book.

[4] How exactly Buckingham arrived at the erroneous conclusion that Columbus was settled "chiefly" by settlers from New England is unknown, but the city did have several prominent families with ancestors from the Northeast to whom he may have been introduced. The bulk of Columbus' 1830's population hailed from elsewhere in Georgia or from the states of Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina.

attended than either of the churches; and races, balls, and the gaming table seem more popular here than religion. There is a Lyceum, but it numbers less than 100 members, and it has its gratuitous lectures delivered from time to time in the Methodist church, from inability or unwillingness to spare the funds necessary to erect a suitable building."

"There are two principal hotels in Columbus, the Oglethorpe and the City hotel, and several subordinate ones. We passed the few days of our stay at the former, and found it as disagreeable, as that at Montgomery had been the reverse. In this, as in most of the American hotels, the master and mistress seemed wholly indifferent to every department of the business, except making high charges and receiving the payments. One rarely or ever see them at any part of the day, as they have their private rooms, and might be taken for strangers or guests, rather than managers of the concern. All is left to the slaves, who constitute the only servants here, and all is accordingly neglected...The common deficiency of washbasins and jugs, of towels and glasses, with broken locks, broken panes, and curtainless windows, was here more than usually apparent; and there being but few attendants-and these unskillful and unwilling-and no bell or other method of calling them, the traveler must help himself as well as he can."

"It was remarkable that this hotel was spoken of, far and near, as being provided with 'silver forks;' and as this was thought a great luxury and refinement, it was presumed that everything else was on a corresponding scale. But this was a most erroneous conclusion; silver forks indeed there were, but the spoons were pewter, and the tea-service of queen's-metal, while the fare at table was so bad, that though we had been now tolerably well trained into the miserable living of country hotels in the South, this was almost unbearable, and we had some difficulty, indeed, in mustering appetites to eat sufficient for mere subsistence—comfort or enjoyment was quite out of the question. Though our own tastes were of the simplest kind, yet where the bread is but half baked, the butter rancid, the milk sour, the water dirty, the eggs stale, and every kind of meat and poultry as tough as leather, it is difficult for even persons of simple tastes to live tolerably...We had stipulated for a private sitting-room, and one was nominally awarded to us; but they could not comprehend the propriety of preventing other persons from coming and sitting in it, if they chose..."

"There are three weekly newspapers in Columbus-the *Inquirer* (sic), *Argus*, and *Sentinel*-but only one bookseller's and stationer's shop, and that so poorly furnished, that we could not procure even a sheet of drawing-paper, or card-board, of the smallest size-no kind of drawing materials being ever inquired for, as we were told; and their supply of books was ill-assorted and scanty. Everything connected with literature or the arts seemed indeed to be at a lower ebb in Columbus, than we had found it in any town in which we had made any stay in the United States, which is the more remarkable, when it is considered that its inhabitants are chiefly settlers from New England..."

"In the sitting-room which we occupied at Columbus, was a full-length portrait of General M'Intosh, the late chief of the Creek nation, habited in that singular mixture of European and Indian costume...[5] His character appeared to be held in the highest esteem by the American residents in Columbus, chiefly because many of them had profited by his treachery; but, as far as we could learn his history, even from the testimony of his admirers, it was base and dishonourable towards the tribe of which he was the chief and leader. The Creek nation were the occupants and admitted proprietors of a large portion of the soil of Georgia, embracing an area of 900 square miles, up to a comparatively recent period, 1825; and the government of the United States, in pursuance of their long-settled policy of removing all the Indian tribes to the territories west of the Mississippi, made great efforts to prevail on the Creeks to sell their lands, and emigrate westward. As these Indians, however, like the Cherokees, had made some advances in civilization, had built houses, enclosed and cultivated farms, and were leading an agricultural and social life, they were exceedingly averse to moving, and rejected all offers made to them. Measures were then taken to bribe the chief, M'Intosh, into an acquiescense with the views of the government, and to employ his influence to bribe and seduce a few others to join him in the design. These represented themselves as the competent authorities of the whole Creek nation, which they were not. As such, they made a treaty with the United States' commissioners, agreeing, for certain considerations, to alienate their lands, and

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[5] Buckingham was probably referring to a copy of one of the portraits of Creek chief William McIntosh, produced during a visit to Washington, D.C., by a delegation of Creek leaders at the behest of Superintendent of the Bureau of Indian Affairs Thomas McKenney. Like many Native American leaders of the era in the South, McIntosh had both European and Indian ancestry. His father was a Scottish trader and his mother a Creek woman.

remove to the west of the Mississippi...Here the treaty of sale and cession of the Creek lands was signed...But when the rest of the nation saw that the treaty could not be abrogated, they resolved to be revenged on their chief, by whom they had been thus betrayed. About two hours before day-light, on Sunday morning, May 1st, the house of General M'Intosh was surrounded by Menaw-way, and about 100 Oakfuskee warriors...The warriors then set fire to the house, and as M'Intosh and his companion attempted to come out, they shot them dead."

"Notwithstanding this, the treaty was acted on by the United States' government, and force was employed to compel the Indians to remove. This led, as might have been expected, to resistance; and in the war thus created, the greatest atrocities were perpetrated on either side.[6] Columbus and its neighbourhood had its full share of the horrors of this bloody campaign; the recollection of which, indeed, is so fresh in the memory of most of the inhabitants here, that they seem to feel a renewal of the terrors inspired by the original events while describing them to others...These events happened about three years ago only, but though the greater part of the Creek Indians have been actually removed, and their lands are now held by American purchasers, yet the Creek war can hardly yet be said to be at an end; for a number of fugitive Indians, who would not join the removing party, still continue in the territory, and pursue a sort of guerilla warfare against the whites, whenever an opportunity offers for revenge. Even now, in May, 1839, during our actual stay at Columbus, the following events occurred, and were made public in the Columbus papers."

'MORE INDIAN MURDERS.-The following letter, giving an account of the murder of several persons on the Apalachicola river, by the Indians, was received by our postmaster yesterday morning, and politely handed us for publication.'

'The steamer Siren, arrived this evening from Apalachicola, brings information of a horrid massacre committed by a party of Indians, on Friday night last, on the Apalachicola river, about fifty miles below the junction of the Chattahoochee and Flint rivers. Seven or eight individuals of both

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[6] Buckingham is referring to the Second Creek War of 1836, which was fought in large part in the Chattahoochee Valley. Some of the brief war's most famous (the burning of the town of Roanoke) and decisive (the Battle of Shepherd's Plantation) incidents occurred a short distance from Columbus in Stewart County, and troops were stationed in the city during the conflict.

sexes were murdered, and their bodies burned. The Siren stopped at the spot on Sunday, and the crew and passengers interred the remains of the murdered...'

"After all, it is hardly to be wondered at, that the Indians should thus act and feel towards their betrayers and oppressors...According to the testimony of persons with whom we conversed on this subject at Columbus, it was a common practice with the whites, who had congregated here as land speculators, at the conclusion of M'Intosh's treaty before mentioned, to act thus.[7] They would first decoy one of the Indians of the Creek tribe, by prevailing on him to drink whiskey; and when they had got him thus completely under their control, they would procure two other Indians, and two unprincipled whites as witnesses, get the Indians to swear in their presence to a document describing the boundaries of certain plots of land, as being his property, and assigning it over to the white purchaser, for a large consideration, in money, and in goods. They would then take him before a district-court, or magistrate, who would publicly ratify this sale; and after paying the Indian, perhaps, a twentieth of the sum set forth in the document of sale, they would get the white witnesses to swear that he had been paid the whole amount in their presence, and had afterwards squandered or lost it..."

"The influence of such transactions as these fraudulent land-purchases, on the general state of society at Columbus, is felt very powerfully at present, and will continue to be felt, no doubt, for years to come. That there are some excellent, honourable families living there, and in its neighbourhood, is undoubtedly true; but the great bulk of the community furnish some of the worst specimens of character, and the reputation of Columbus stands at a low estimate..."[8]

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[7] The role of Columbus-based speculators in defrauding Creeks of their lands has received relatively scant scholarly attention. One of the best and most succinct accounts widely available can be found in Mary Elizabeth Young's *Redskins, Ruffleshirts, and Rednecks: Indian Allotments in Alabama and Mississippi 1830-1860* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1961). A forthcoming book by local historian Billy Winn and a new work by Columbus State professor John Ellisor promise to shed new light on this aspect of regional history. See John T. Ellisor, *The Second Creek War: Interethnic Conflict and Collusion on a Collapsing Frontier* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2010).

[8] Accounts of the role of Columbus citizens in defrauding the Creeks had been printed in several places, and as far away as New York city the reputation of Columbus was disparaged by some.

"After being detained longer than we wished, from the difficulty of getting conveyances for Macon, we considered ourselves fortunate in being at length released from our confinement at Columbus."

Rescuing Chattahoochee Valley's Neglected and Abandoned Cemeteries

by

John Mallory Land

A group of concerned citizens recently met to discuss the dire state of many of the cemeteries and burial sites in and around Muscogee County. The result of this conversation was the formation of a new organization, the Chattahoochee Valley Cemeteries Society (CVCS).[1] This new association is charged with rescuing abandoned local burying grounds, working with property owners and cemetery custodians to promote better care and preservation, and advocating more generally with the public and community leaders for greater appreciation of these sacred and valuable sites. The following is the first installment in a multi-part series about the cemeteries of our section and our developing effort to locate, assess, and document any and all burial sites in the region and to preserve those that have not already been lost to neglect, abuse, and urban development.

Woods, Fields, Back Yards, and Parking Lots

How did you first come to realize that there are little-noticed or even abandoned cemeteries in our midst? Some folks may spot a small family lot perilously close to a recently widened road, or stumble upon an unexpected grave while strolling through what seems to be undisturbed woods. Others may hear of graves curiously nestled among the houses of a subdivision, or profanely bounded by a store parking lot. Some happen upon knowledge of these sites while researching family. Perhaps when leaving church, others have glanced over and thought a moment about the silent plots and monuments in the graveyard nearby. Whatever the nature of our introduction, we have all come to know some forgotten, out-of-the-way cemetery in

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[1] For further information about the Chattahoochee Valley Cemeteries Society, please visit their web-site at www.chattahoocheevalleycemeteries.org and their blog at chattahoocheevalleycemeteriessociety.blogspot.com/.

21

the neighborhood, out in the country, or along the highway. In Muscogee County alone, by the latest count, there are at least 110 cemeteries and burial sites – and these are just the ones we know about. No doubt there are others that have grown up in woods, have been cleared of all their markings, or have been covered over by development. Most assuredly, more will be rediscovered in time; in fact, resulting from the publicity of recent efforts to organize cemetery preservation activity, researchers have received a smattering of reports about sites not previously known.

So how did so many cemeteries come to be in Muscogee County? In the old days, a burial plot was often set aside close to the family residence or on a nearby hill; this plot might remain small, limited to one family, or it might grow as the surrounding neighborhood expanded. It was not uncommon from an early date for churches to use a tract adjacent to the church grounds for the use of burials. At times, if a family moved away or a church relocated, such a site might fall into disuse. In other cases, it might continue to be used by another family moving in or by neighbors, in effect becoming a community cemetery. Most often in these parts, no written record was kept of burials, although mention can sometimes be found in church minutes or membership rolls, or in family Bibles, letters, personal diaries, and other private documents. In the case of larger towns like Columbus, particular cemeteries were laid out and operated under the control of the local municipal government, and the sexton overseeing each has usually kept a record of burials on file.

Burials among European descendants generally followed the Christian method, that is, with the remains laid supine and feet oriented toward the east (the idea being that on Judgment Day, the dead would sit up to face the rising sun). If a container was used, it was normally a simple coffin made of pine or other locally available wood. There was not typically a box or vault into which the coffin was placed, but merely a hole dug in the ground. Most graves were not as deep as six feet, as is popularly thought – they were sometimes only eighteen inches deep. Over time, of course, the remains and the coffin decayed, creating the grave depressions, or "sinks,"

22

that we commonly see in older cemeteries. Incidentally, this subsidence often is the cause for heaving, which is the tendency of a grave monument to lean or pitch.

As today, the graves were often laid in more or less regular rows and frequently were grouped by family or other affiliations in lots that were commonly set off with fencing, curbing, or coping. (Coping is the use of brick, marble, granite, or other materials to outline a single grave plot or group of graves. Curbing is a low wall or edging, made of masonry or stone, surrounding a grave or lot of graves, and is frequently decorative; this term is often used interchangeably with coping.) Some graves and lots were set off by wooden fences or coping and some marked with wooden monuments, virtually all of which have long since rotted away to nothing.

There is sometimes confusion around the terminology of an unmarked grave. A marked grave has a monument or some other element indicating that it is a grave. This could be a marker – such as an upright monument, a pillow monument (a.k.a. "slanted marker"), or a flat monument, flush to the ground – at the head of the grave; a field stone at the head and perhaps the foot; a ledger (a.k.a. "slab"); a box tomb (an vault placed above ground, over an in-ground grave); a rock cairn (an above-ground tomb, typically of stacked, rough-cut stone); or a combination of some of these. A grave marked with any of these items is just that: a marked grave. However, the marker may not have any identifying markings – that is, lettering, numbers, and symbols that signify the identity of the person buried there or demographic information such as dates of birth and death, religious or fraternal affiliation, or relationships. So a grave may be marked but not identified. And, of course, some graves have no marker at all, either because they never had a marker, they had a marker made of wood or other unstable material that has decomposed, or they had a permanent marker that has become degraded or displaced over time. Many graves that were previously marked no longer are, and many others never had a marker of any kind. Any cemetery one may visit almost certainly has unmarked graves. If there is a fence around the site, there are often graves outside this boundary; paths, paved lanes and roads, parking areas, or even buildings may cover unmarked graves. This is because oftentimes these

changes and improvements, though old to us now, were made after some unmarked burials had been long forgotten.

It should be noted that, while a separate burying ground was sometimes established for slaves, life in the antebellum South was not as rigidly segregated as it would become after Reconstruction, so it would not be out of the question for blacks and whites to be buried in the same vicinity. Further, structures such as fences, which may have formerly divided adjacent burial areas, have often disappeared over the years, blurring the boundary. In the case of the old Mt. Gilead Primitive Baptist Cemetery in Muscogee County, rediscovered on the Ft. Benning military reservation in 1984, forensic study of the remains showed that twenty-eight of the graves were of white individuals and two of blacks. Of course, as segregation became institutionalized in the South following Reconstruction, church congregations separated by race, and blacks and whites were virtually always buried in separate, though sometimes adjacent, sites. This practice began to change in the mid-twentieth century, however, and has been largely abandoned today. (Incidentally, Mt. Gilead Primitive Baptist Church moved in 1850 to its present location, and its name was changed to County Line Primitive Baptist. This location was in Chattahoochee County until the early 1940s, when the Chattahoochee-Marion county line was deviated to put the church and cemetery in Marion County rather than on the military reservation as it had expanded at that time.)

In some instances, a cemetery may appear on a plat map for a tract of land or on a map of property owners made for taxation purposes. However, in many cases it will not. Sometimes a graveyard is mentioned in a deed, being a portion of a tract excepted from the transfer and being reserved to the family for use as a burying ground in perpetuity. In some jurisdictions, if such an exception is made even once in a chain of title to a tract, it remains in force even if it is never included in any subsequent deed. It should be noted that, by precedent, the Georgia state code guarantees the right of access for any heir or descendant to any burial ground – even if it is on private property – for the purpose of visitation, care, and maintenance.

Private Cemeteries on the Fort Benning Military Reservation

Fort Benning was established in 1918 as Camp Benning, and boundaries of the original installation included a part of Muscogee County, on which some private cemeteries were situated. Later, during World War II, the military reservation was expanded, taking in considerably more acreage and with it more cemeteries. Of all the improvements on the land at the time it was condemned and taken over, the cemeteries are essentially the only sites that the military has committed not to encroach upon. Records and supplemental research show that there are at least twenty-six burial sites within the Muscogee County area of Ft. Benning.
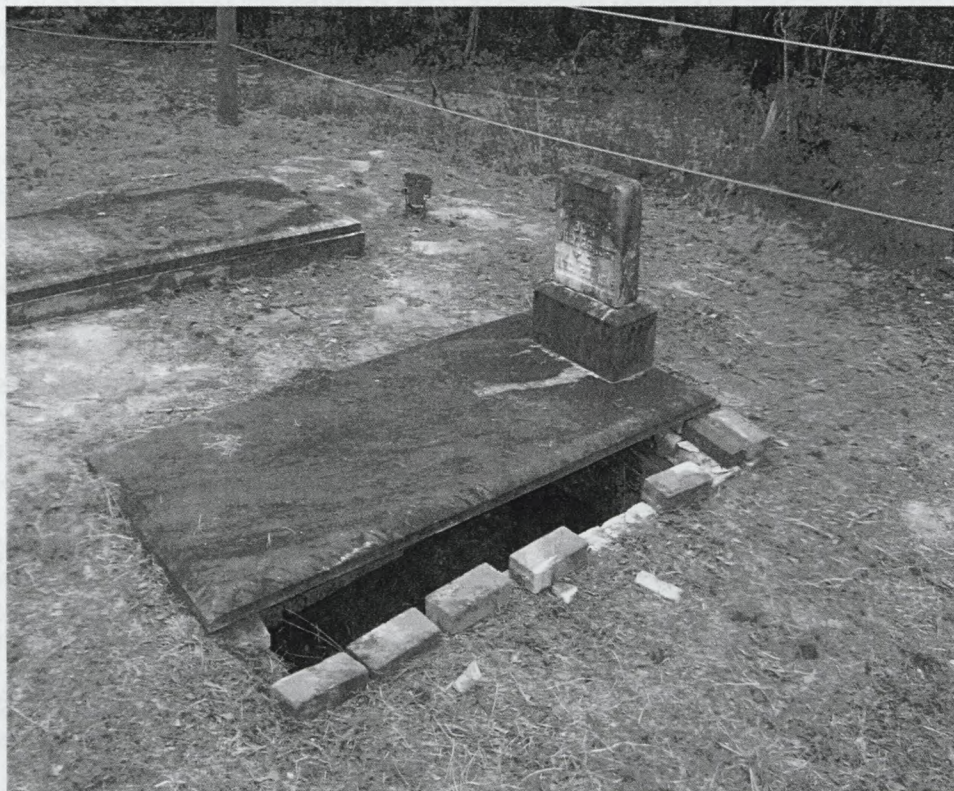
Fig. 1. Johnson Cemetery
The exposed vault of the grave of D. S. Gallops (1860-1915), at Johnson Cemetery in the Chattahoochee County area of the Ft. Benning military reservation. Correcting problems like this is the responsibility of relatives and descendants, not the government.
Courtesy of John Mallory Land

With respect to these sites, the military contracts with private companies to provide basic maintenance, namely mowing and abating weeds. They have also had crews place post-and-cable

fences around each cemetery that did not already have a fence. The sites are supposed to be off limits to military activity; if by chance monuments or graves are damaged as the result of maneuvers or training exercises, the military is responsible for repairing or replacing them. However, the military has no obligation to carry out ongoing maintenance or repair of the monuments. As with cemeteries everywhere, this is the responsibility of the families and descendants. A lot of folks are ignorant of this fact and of the need for action on their part to repair and maintain these cemetery features (see Figure 1).

In order to visit a cemetery on the reservation, a party is advised to check ahead of time with Range Control to be sure no training exercises or other activities will be taking place in the vicinity of the cemetery to be visited. The army prefers that the visitor be escorted by a military or civilian representative while on the reservation; however, such persons sometimes know less about a given cemetery or its location than the visitor—and at times nothing at all. The author speaks from experience on this point.

Because of the current expansion of facilities taking place on the base, quite a bit of archaeological investigation is being conducted to locate unmarked graves and lost burial sites. In particular, surveys have been conducted where roads are being widened and outside the fences of known cemeteries, as these fences were usually placed according to what graves could be observed on the ground at the time. In addition, in the course of ongoing facilities development, about thirteen burial sites have been newly rediscovered that do not appear in the survey listing of Fort Benning private cemeteries completed in 1981. Unfortunately, the site reports detailing many of these discoveries have been placed off-limits to the general public. This is probably because they also mention the locations of Native American burials and other cultural sites, and authorities fear that unscrupulous individuals may seek to plunder them for artifacts to collect or sell. The military is reportedly negotiating to obtain even more acreage, which presents the possibility that they will become the custodians of yet more private cemeteries.

Plans are presently in the works to form a Friends of Fort Benning Cemeteries society, which will be dedicated specifically to navigating the military and civilian bureaucracy at the post, monitoring care of the sites, and organizing families and other interested parties to preserve the graves themselves.

Getting a Handle on a Grave Problem

As the name implies, the Chattahoochee Valley Cemeteries Society will seek to protect and advocate for cemeteries throughout the Chattahoochee Valley. The volunteer group is starting with Muscogee County cemeteries and will expand to surrounding counties in Georgia and Alabama as membership and resources grow, so the focus of this series initially will be on cemeteries and burial places within the current bounds of the county.

There are four city cemeteries in Columbus: Porterdale, Linwood, Riverdale, and East Porterdale, which are under the administration of the Public Services Department within the Columbus-Muscogee County Consolidated Government (CCG) and are directly overseen by the City Sexton. The CVCS hopes to work with the CCG, as well as the Riverdale-Porterdale Cemetery Foundation (RPCF) and the Historic Linwood Foundation (HLF), to promote improved cemetery care and preservation and increased appreciation of these cultural treasures. Additionally, the archaeological firm Brockington & Associates, based in Norcross, Georgia, has been engaged by the CCG to conduct ground-penetrating radar (GPR) and other forensic evaluation in order to locate any graves in the area believed to be an old slave cemetery at the northeast corner of Sixth Avenue and Sixth Street. On-site investigation was carried out in November, and if study results confirm the presence of graves, it is expected that this site will also come under the custody of the City Sexton's office.

There are several perpetual care cemeteries in Muscogee County: Evergreen, Green Acres, and Parkhill. These cemeteries are professionally cared for, and the companies that run them have ostensibly set up endowment accounts intended to fund the future care and

maintenance of these sites. The CVCS hopes to work with these cemeteries on issues such as the curtailment of vandalism and theft of grave monuments and decorative elements.

The remaining cemeteries and burial sites throughout the county are principally family burying grounds, church graveyards, and smaller community cemeteries. The ravages of time often make it difficult to tell what type of cemetery a site has been, how long it has been in use, or how big it is. In some cases, there is currently a custodian for these sites, such as a church congregation or a family group, to care for the graves and grounds. In fact, there are instances where excellent care is afforded to a cemetery or burial plot. However, at most sites, about all the responsible parties manage to do is keep the grass cut, the weeds at bay, and the grave depressions leveled off – and sometimes not even that! And of course, there are some burying grounds that evidently have no one tending them and have not had for a very long time. Many sites still have marked graves, at least a few of which are still identifiable, while others may have few or no marked graves, but only the familiar sinks laid out in distinctive orientation and rows.

The more degraded a site has become, the more difficult it can be to determine what family or community it served or to know the identities of those buried in it. Knowledgeable neighbors, deed and plat records, newspaper articles and notices, and histories of families, churches, and communities can provide valuable clues when retrieving the story of a burial site from oblivion. Historic cemeteries pose a moving target. Over time, they often changed names, or sometimes had no name at all; many interments reported in published death notices of days gone by took place simply in the "old family burying grounds" located "six miles east of this city on the Buena Vista road," for instance.

Below we will attempt to enumerate all of the known burial sites (excluding the city cemeteries, the perpetual care sites, and the private burying grounds currently located on the Ft. Benning post or reservation). As previously noted, an accurate name is often not known, so some sites are referred to by past or current researchers according to their location or by the surnames detected, if any.

Muscogee County Private, Church, and Community Cemeteries

Alexander-McBride – back yard of 2814 Walnut St. - only two marked graves, each dated 1941, African-American, evidently a father and daughter. At least three unmarked graves observed, and perhaps more. On the edge of the old Adams Plantation tract.

Barnett-Ingram – Grey Rock Rd., 2 miles west of Warm Springs Rd. - at least seventeen graves.

Beallwood Baptist – north side of 43rd St., between Sherwood and 17th Avenues – over 400 graves. Predominantly African-American and said to be currently under the care of the Greater Beallwood Baptist Church.

Bethel Missionary Baptist (a.k.a. Willis) – at Bethel Baptist Church, on north side of Flat Rock Road, about 100 yards east of Warm Springs Rd. – at least four graves.

Biggers – off River Rd., north of the nine-mile marker, past Standing Boy Creek – at least forty-one graves.

Blow (a.k.a. Moon-Ratliff-Slaughter) – behind 6011 Cordova St. - at least fifteen graves; it is not presently known if the reported name of "Blow" in this instance is a surname or perhaps the name of a church or community.

Boyd – on the south side of farmhouse, the "Gingerbread House," on the west side of Cartledge Rd., north of Macon Rd. (this location is very near the Muscogee-Talbot county line and may in fact be in Talbot) – at least four graves.

Carter-Meachum-Oattis-Willis (a.k.a. Meacham; also, Willis – n.b.: **not** to be confused with the Bethel Missionary Baptist Cemetery, which is also known as Willis) – south side of County Line Rd., 4/10 mile east of Midland Rd. - at least seventeen graves.

Cartledge-Glenn-Ramsay – off Schomburg Rd., 1/2 mile north of Warm Springs Rd. - at least fourteen graves.

Clapp's Factory (see Figure 2) – west of River Walk, just south of the northern terminus at Lake Oliver Rd. – between 300 and 500 graves, only one of which is still clearly marked.

Cooper – intersection of Miller Rd. and Warm Springs Rd. - three marked graves, including a Revolutionary veteran; if no formal survey has been conducted, there may be unmarked graves at this site, including outside the fence and even under the adjacent paved car lot.

Countryman (a.k.a. Reese) – off of Smith Rd. - many graves, only one of which is marked.

County Line Baptist – west side of Layfield Rd., just south of Macon Rd. - many graves, predominantly African-American.

Covington – west side of Cartledge Rd., just south of Macon Rd. - at least twenty-eight graves.

Cummings-Shippey (includes Jones-Floyd-Hanks lot; a.k.a. Willett) – south side of Willett Rd. - at least twenty-two graves.

Davis-Prince – Warm Springs Rd., 1/2 mile south of Blackmon Rd. - at least three graves.

Fig. 2. Clapp's Factory Cemetery
Located below Oliver Dam, this cemetery was active from the 1830s until 1904.
Encompassing an estimated 300 to 500 graves, the site has been allowed to
grow up in woods over the last thirty years or so. The ledger fragment is part of
the monument for John Lewis, 1816-1885.
Courtesy of John Mallory Land

Davidson-Teel – Hubbard Rd., near I-185 overpass – twelve to fifteen graves reported, only one
still marked; said to have been destroyed.

[Note: the historic Dean-Cartledge Cemetery was destroyed in 1999 when the 11 known graves
were removed to Parkhill Memorial Park so that a Total System facility could be built on the tract
– northwest corner of Moon Road and Stone Mill Dr.]

Double Churches (Mt. Moriah Primitive Baptist and Mt. Zion Missionary Baptist) – south of Double
Churches Rd., west of Whitesville Rd. – over 400 graves.

Edgewood Rd. - no further information; perhaps conflated with graves reportedly under the
cafeteria at Edgewood Elementary School.

Edgewood Elementary School – it has been reported, but not verified, that the cafeteria of this
school building, at 3835 Forrest Rd., sits on an African-American burying ground – if so, number
of graves not known.

Esquiline (a.k.a. Moses) – Benning Hills residential subdivision – at least thirty-eight graves.

Father Cullinan – left side of the main entrance to the Church of the Holy Family on 12th St. at
4th Ave – one grave only.

Fortson-Pruett – adjacent to a large rock quarry on the property of Vulcan Materials Company,
west of Fortson Rd. - at least fifteen graves.

Garrett Rd. - grave sinks and one field marker, none with IDs, said to be African-American - approximately twenty-one graves.

Getzen Memorial Baptist – west side of Fortson Rd., 3/4 mile north of Smith Rd./Wooldridge Rd. – at least eighty-five graves.

Goins – in woods on hill east of Fortson Rd., just south of where the road crosses the railroad tracks, on Vulcan Materials Company property – at least five graves.

Green Hill Baptist – 4177 Milgen Rd., at Grant Dr. - at least seventy-six graves.

Habersham Dr. - reportedly at back of lot at 2607 Habersham Dr., residential subdivision behind Cross County Shopping Center – number of graves not known.

Hazleton – 5565 Macon Rd. (said to have been on Waddell property; residence and grave reportedly demolished) - at least one grave.

Hopewell Baptist – 13400 Upatoi Ln. in Upatoi, predominantly African-American – hundreds of graves.

Jackson-Lee-Jenkins-Cartledge – off Layfield Rd., north of Macon Rd. - at least twenty graves.

Jenkins – behind Midland United Methodist Church (9100 Warm Springs Rd.) - at least fifty-eight graves in fenced-in area; large number of graves in adjacent woods, believed to be Jenkins family slaves and other African-Americans.

Jones-Carnes-Wilcox – Heritage Dr., off Jenkins Rd. in Upatoi – at least thirteen graves; small child grave is reportedly only one still marked.

Lakebottom – reported to have been in the Lakebottom area of Columbus (in addition to the Midway
Cemetery reported in that area) – no further data.

Lee – west of Layfield Rd., south of Macon Rd., between railroad tracks and the Ft. Benning military reservation – at least eight graves.

Liberty Hall (a.k.a. Huff-Christmas) – just south of County Line Rd., on Freedom Trail – at least nine graves.

Locust Hill Baptist – west of Lynch Rd., at 8300 Warm Springs Rd. (south side of road) – predominantly African-American, hundreds of graves.

Lynch-Beard-Garrett (perhaps same as Pye-Lynch Plantation) – Old Warm Springs Rd. - no further data.

Lynch-Duncan – around 6001 Macon Rd., north side of the road, east of Woodruff Farm Rd., in woods – at least four graves.

Mackey-Parker – 8181 River Rd. (west side of road), by gated drive to a private residence – at least twenty-one graves.

Macon Rd. - near Sears Woods residential subdivision – not confirmed, number of graves not known.

McFarland (a.k.a. McFarland, McFarlane, McFarlin) – off County Line Rd., three miles east of Manchester Expwy. - at least twenty-three graves.

Mealing (a.k.a. Franklin-Jackson-Johnston) – west shoulder of Whitesville Rd., south of Whittlesey Rd. - at least twenty graves.

Midway – reported to have been in the Lakebottom area of Columbus – no further data.

Mobley Rd. - behind Waterford Place residential subdivision, south of Mobley Rd., grave sinks, none with IDs, said to be African-American - approximately twenty graves.

Moon-David – behind 4513 Greenbridge Dr.; access at 4377 White Clover Trail in the Shamrock Glen residential subdivision – at least thirty-nine graves.

Mt. Gilead African Methodist Episcopal – east side of access road and railroad tracks that lead onto the Vulcan Materials Company property from Fortson Rd. - hundreds of graves.

Near municipal dump – reportedly a pet cemetery.

Nix – north side of Buena Vista Rd., west of Floyd Rd., directly behind a strip shopping center that currently includes a Subway sandwich shop – at least seventeen graves.

Old Russell-Whitley – south side of Warm Springs Rd., about 1/2 mile west of Lynch Rd. - at least ninety graves.

Olsen Ave. - casket handles were dug up, probably in the 1960s, on the edge of a lot at 506 (?) Olsen Ave., near Steam Mill Rd. - number of graves not known.

Pace – on Biggers Rd., one mile east of River Rd. - at least thirty-three graves.

Patrick Memorial – east side of McBride Dr., just south of Buena Vista Rd. - at least 300 graves.

Patterson (a.k.a. Patterson-McNair-Cox-Roberson) – just inside woodline on bank along westbound Macon Rd., west of McKee Rd. - at least four graves.

Peddy (a.k.a. Peddy-Jones-Clark) – south side of Williams Rd., just east of Whitesville Rd. - at least nine graves.

Phillips – on bank in woods, west side of McKee Rd., 4/10 mile north of Macon Rd. - at least eight graves.

Pickard-West-Billings – northeast side of Blackmon Rd., 1/10 mile northwest of Warm Springs Rd. - number of graves not known.

Pierce Chapel Methodist – just over the Harris County line, on north side of Pierce Chapel Road, across from the Pierce Chapel Methodist Church – hundreds of graves

Pierce Chapel – another cemetery is further along the dirt lane, west of the Pierce Chapel Methodist Cemetery, part of which is said to be under power lines, and which may be predominantly African-American – number of graves not known.

Pitts African Methodist Episcopal – 7501 Lynch Rd., near the entrance to Bull Creek Golf Course, predominantly African-American – at least thirty-six graves.

<u>Providence Freewill Baptist</u> – 5401 St. Mary's Rd., near Bunker Hill St. - at least 209 graves.

<u>Radcliff</u> (see Figure 3) – behind Carter Monumental Christian Methodist Episcopal Church, at 559 Radcliff Ave., just north of MLK Jr. Blvd. - predominantly African-American, hundreds of graves.

Fig. 3. Radcliff Cemetery
Even when a cemetery receives periodic tending, such as Radcliff (or Wynnton Hill) Cemetery in Columbus, ledger markers may disappear over time beneath an accumulation of leaves and pine needles.
Courtesy of Linda Farmer Ames

<u>Shiloh Methodist (a.k.a. Water Shiloh)</u> – southeast corner of Double Churches Rd. and Whitesville Rd., just east of fuel station – at least 183 graves.

<u>Shippy</u> – back in the woods north of Willett Dr. (entrance across and just west of the Cummings-Shippey Cemetery) – predominantly African-American, possibly begun as a slave cemetery and subsequently associated with a church and school at this site – at lest 144 graves.

<u>Soldiers</u> – along the Chattahoochee River, north and west of the intersection of 2nd Ave. and 45th St. (perhaps same as Clapp's Factory; thought to possibly be graves of Federal soldiers from the siege of Girard and Columbus at the close of the Civil War) – twenty-five to thirty graves reported.

<u>Springlake Dr.</u> - graves (two marked with granite monuments, one with field stone) in what became the back yard of 6649 Springlake Dr. in residential subdivision; possibly destroyed by re-grading of the lot - at least five graves reported.

<u>Taylor-David-Ogletree</u> – on Ogletree farm near the Chattahoochee River in General Militia District #772 (Nances District, a.k.a. McCrary District) – at least seven graves.

<u>Vulcan Materials</u> – one of four cemeteries reported to be on the property of the Vulcan Materials Company (the known three being: Forston-Pruett, Goins, and Mt. Gilead A.M.E.) – no details on this reported fourth cemetery could be obtained from Vulcan personnel (December 2010).

<u>Watt-Calhoun</u> – not far from Pierce Chapel Rd., on the old Watt home-place – at least five graves.

<u>West</u> – south side of Warm Springs Rd., near Psalmond Rd. (a historical marker commemorating Blind Tom Wiggins is posted along the road here) – at least five graves.

Conclusion

There is no doubt that this list includes mistakes and that any number of burial sites within Muscogee County have yet to be rediscovered and documented. Upcoming installments in this series will include corrections and additions, as information becomes available. Future installments will also highlight the history, families, and present condition of specific cemeteries on this list and begin to explore burial sites in neighboring counties as well.

Let us take a moment to remember and thank the many volunteers who have contributed to our knowledge of local cemeteries over the years by braving the elements to seek out and survey these sites. These selfless folk are too numerous to name here – and some of their names are lost to us – but they deserve our praise and admiration. A special thanks goes to June Hanna, who moved to Columbus from Texas in the 1960s and, with her husband and various guides and assistants, scouted out and documented dozens of cemeteries in the local area over the next couple of decades. Mrs. Hanna has truly blessed posterity with her tireless efforts.

The graves of many folk in what is now Muscogee County will probably never be known to us. Some cemeteries may very well have vanished without a trace. But many remain, waiting to be rediscovered, to be returned to a beautiful, respectable state, and to be honored for the sacred sites they are. The care and preservation of cemeteries is a "forever" problem that requires and deserves a "forever" solution – or as near to "forever" as we may come – by forming dedicated organizations that will persevere in the cause long after we are ourselves resting in one of these quiet, dignified havens.

The Rock Island Paper Mill

by

Jesse Williams

What was one of the great inventions of man that helped foster the growth of civilization? It helped the growth of trade and commerce. It was used to send messages from the commanders to their subordinates on the battlefield. It forged agreements between allies and foe. It recorded history. Paper!

The need for an affordable and constant supply of paper on the southern frontier was probably one of the driving factors behind the group of men who together formed the Rock Island Paper Factory corporation in Columbus. [See the Incorporation Agreement at the end of this article.] Headed by Columbus' wealthiest citizen, John G. Winter, the group purchased 146 acres of land in Lee County, Alabama, from Major R. S. Hardaway of Muscogee County, Georgia. They built the factory on a four-acre island in the Chattahoochee River, two and a half miles above Columbus. The factory became a very successful paper mill. The three-story building seventy-five feet long by thirty-six feet wide was located on the island with a finishing room, warehouse, and accessory structures on the Alabama land. By 1850, the company employed seven girls, two boys, thirteen men and a teamster. A foreman was paid $100 dollars per month, a machinist $60, two operatives $40, and the girls $8. The remaining laborers were possibly slaves.[1] With a capital of $40,000, by 1850 the factory operated a Fordenier machine and could make paper to equal the quality of any made in the North.[2] The Rock Island Factory manufactured printing, letter and wrapping paper.[3]

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[1] *De Bow's Review,* July-December 1850, 431.

[2] *Columbus Enquirer*, January 23, 1850.

[3] *The Rebellion Record: A Diary of American Events with Documents, Narratives, Illustrative incidents, Poetry, Etc.,* Vol. 11 (Princeton, NJ: D. Van Nostrand, 1868), 700.

It took a tremendous amount of power and material to produce paper on the scale at which the Rock Island Factory operated, so the factory harnessed the Chattahoochee River by the use of a dam. The dam was constructed with one end anchored to a bed of rocks in the river and the other secured to the Alabama shore in order to power the factory on the island. By 1851 there must have been a need for more power, for an act passed by the Georgia General Assembly secured the company certain privileges "to repair, keep up, or reconstruct in a more substantial manner, the dam which said Rock Island Factory has now in use."[4]

Old rags were needed to produce a good quality paper product. The Rock Island Company ran ads in all of the regional newspapers for old rags. In 1851 the company advertised for cotton and linen rags and paid four cents a pound if delivered in quantities of one hundred pounds or more or three and a half cents when quantities were less. They even took wool, but not bagging or rope.[5] By 1858 they advertised for gin motes, paying one cent per pound if delivered to a railroad within one hundred miles of Columbus. If farther away, the cost of shipment would be deducted from the price.[6]

The *Memphis Daily Appeal* on June 13, 1863, vividly described paper-making at the Rock Island Paper Factory in an article reprinted from the *Columbus Sun*:

Rock Island Mills

The editor of the *Columbus Sun* has recently visited the Rock Island paper mills, and thus describes the process of paper making and alludes to some of the difficulties which be set paper makers:

Through the courtesy of Mr. J. F. Winter we were treated to a delightful drive to and from the above mills, located two and a quarter miles north of the city, in Alabama, on the Chattahoochee river, and at an island bearing the above name.

The modus operandi of making paper from rags and cotton was politely shown and explained by Mr. W. It is a rare curiosity to the novice, and must be seen and explained to the one initiated to be understood or appreciated.

In the beginning we see the rough, dirty rags which are thrown into revolving boilers, capable of holding fifty thousand pounds, and hot steam let in upon them, which, with the revolving motion of the boilers, aided by some chemicals placed in with the rags, perfectly cleanses them of all filth and dirt.

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[4] "An Act, to secure to the Rock Island Factory certain privileges and for other purposes therein named," *Acts of the General Assembly of the State of Georgia, Passed in Milledgeville at a Biennial Session in November, December, and January, 1851-52.*

[5] *Columbus Enquirer,* July 22, 1851.

[6] *Columbus Enquirer,* September 14, 1858.

We are then carried to the engine, which cuts or grinds the washed rags or cotton into what is called pulp. This pulp, when finished, is thoroughly washed with clear spring water to remove all remaining dirt, and then carried to the machine for converting it into paper.

In another room of the building is a machine used entirely for letter and envelope paper, specimens of which we have now before us both of a superior quality to what they have heretofore manufactured, and which he assures us he shall still improve on, so long as the necessary chemicals and fixtures for his machinery can be obtained.

The energy displayed by Mr. Winter in keeping his mill running, is worthy of all commendation. He showed us fine tapestry carpet which he took from his floors as substitutes for felt, without which his mills are entirely useless.

When three or more reels of wide paper, say four feet wide, is obtained, they are placed on a machine for cutting to the sizes desired. As the fabric is drawn through this machine little rollers cut it smoothly in the center and trim the edges, while a revolving knife cuts it the desired length.

Two girls receive the sheets as cut and lay them even and smooth. So soon as the cutting is done one of the girls proceeds to count it into quires, while another folds it. A stout negro fellow packs the quires into bundles, binds and marks them ready for shipment to the office in the city.

The want of wire cloth has forced Mr. Winter to convert his machine, which is a Feuudrineer [Fordenier], into a cylinder, which he informs us very seriously curtails his operations in the amount of paper turned off. The present capacity of the mill in the news department is about forty thousand pounds per month.

We cannot pretend to describe how the pulp floats in the water so thin one can scarcely observe it, but is gathered in a smooth thin flake in a revolving cylinder covered with fine wire cloth, which it delivers on to an endless blanket, passing over this, it is taken by either machinery as delicately as dainty fingers could do it, and separated from the endless blanket; a frail wisp looking sheet of white, passing now over and then under cylinders heated with steam, drying as it goes; then through the callendering rollers which irons it smooth, and on to a reel where it is wound up, which soon as full is taken off and another put in its place.

We candidly acknowledge we did not appreciate the half of the labor and vexations to which the mill had been subjected since the commencement of the war and the blockade. Many have said hard things of its management, while, if they had been in charge they would have shrunk from the job before them. The domestic arrangements of the mill and care for the operatives is high toned, noble, and manly and it affords us pleasure to thus pay him the public compliment.[7]

People could leave old rags at Ellis and Gray's or J. B. Hicks in Columbus or at B. Whitehurst and Lanier's in Girard. The company had offices in Macon and Milledgeville, Georgia and in Mobile, Alabama. Their Columbus office was The Rock Island Paper Mills Agency, G. B. Curtis agent.[8]

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[7] *Memphis Daily Appeal,* June 13, 1863.

[8] *Columbus Enquirer,* August 23, 1853.

The publishing firm of S. H. Goetzel, located in the heart of Mobile's business district at 33

Dauphin Street, was one of the Rock Island Factory's most important customers before the Civil War.

Today all of the Goetzel publications are scarce, and some of them are very rare. During the Civil

War, the Rock Island Factory was restricted from selling to almost everyone except the Confederate

government.[9] As with many other useful items during the war, there was a shortage of any paper

products. Because of that shortage the most collectable of S. H. Goetzel's books are the ones with

their covers printed on wallpaper.

The factory remained in operation from 1849 until burnt by General James Wilson's troops in

April of 1865, the day after the Battle of Columbus.[10] It was never rebuilt and, except for the most

historically minded few, it has been forgotten. Today the island in the river and land on the Alabama

shore are totally unrecognizable as the hub for a paper mill. When the North Highland Dam, or what

locals refer to as the "Bibb Dam," was constructed in 1901, the lake behind the dam reduced the

island from four acres to two.[11] A portion of the rock outcropping where one end of the dam was

secured can still be seen above the surface. The Alabama land has mostly reverted back to its natural

state.

[9] Cathleen A. Baker, *The Enterprising S. H. Goetzel: Antebellum and Civil War Publisher in Mobile, Alabama*, The Legacy Press, http://www.legacy-press.com/other%20files/S_H_Goetzel.pdf (accessed December 17, 2010).

[10] John Martin , *"Columbus, Georgia from its Selection as a "Trading Town" to its partial Destruction by Wilson's Raid 1865* (Columbus, GA: Thos Gilbert, Book Printer and Binder, 1874), 36, 182.

[11] John S. Lupold, J. B. Karfunkle, and Barbara Kimmelman, "Water Power Development at the Falls of the Chattahoochee 1828 Muscogee County, Georgia" Historic American Engineering Record GA-22, 1977, Columbus State University Archives.

Incorporation Agreement for the Rock Island Paper Mill

State of Georgia
Muscogee County

      To ever whom these presents shall come, Greeting. Know ye that. We, John G. Winter, Henry Crew, Elias Hull, Francis M. Lanais, John L. Woodward, Benoni Smith, J. L. Mustain, E. L. Ellsworth, G. W. Winter, Joseph S. Winter, James G. Winter, Peter McLain, John L. Bassinger & Brother, have appointed ourselves together as a body incorporated for the purpose of engaging in the business of manufacturing paper & books binding. And that we have adopted as our corporate name by which we will sue and be sued, Rock Island Factory. & by which we will be known & designated. That we have subscribed as our Capital Stock the sum of Twenty Five Thousand Dollars. Which will be employed in the business before mentioned.

Signed in the presents of
Andrew P. Jones   J. P.

<div align="center">Recorded 26th Sept. 1848</div>

                         John G. Winter
                         Henry Crew
                         Elias Hull
                         Francis M. Lanais
                         John L. Woodward
                         Benoni Smith
                         J. L. Mustain
                         E. L. Ellsworth
                         G. W. Winters
                         Joseph S. Winter
                         James G. Winter
                         Peter McLain
                         John L. Bassinger

Rock Island Factory Incorporation, Muscogee County Deed Book

An Act, to secure to the Rock Island Factory certain privileges and for other purposes therein named,

57. SEC. I. *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the State of Georgia in General Assembly met, and it is hereby enacted by the authority of the same,*

That the Rock Island Factory is hereby authorized to repair, keep up, or reconstruct in a more substantial manner, the dam which said Rock Island Factory has now in use, extending from the western bank of the [Illegible Text] river to a bed of rocks in or on said river commonly known as Rock Island, together with such abutments and fixtures on and along said Island as may enable said Rock Island Factory the more successfully to propel their present machinery, or such other as they may deem proper to put in [Illegible Text] for manufacturing or mechanical purposes.

Index

Purpose

The Muscogee Genealogical Society is dedicated to the preservation of the history of the Columbus/Original Muscogee County area and its people, as well as the education of individuals in the techniques of discovering their own heritage.

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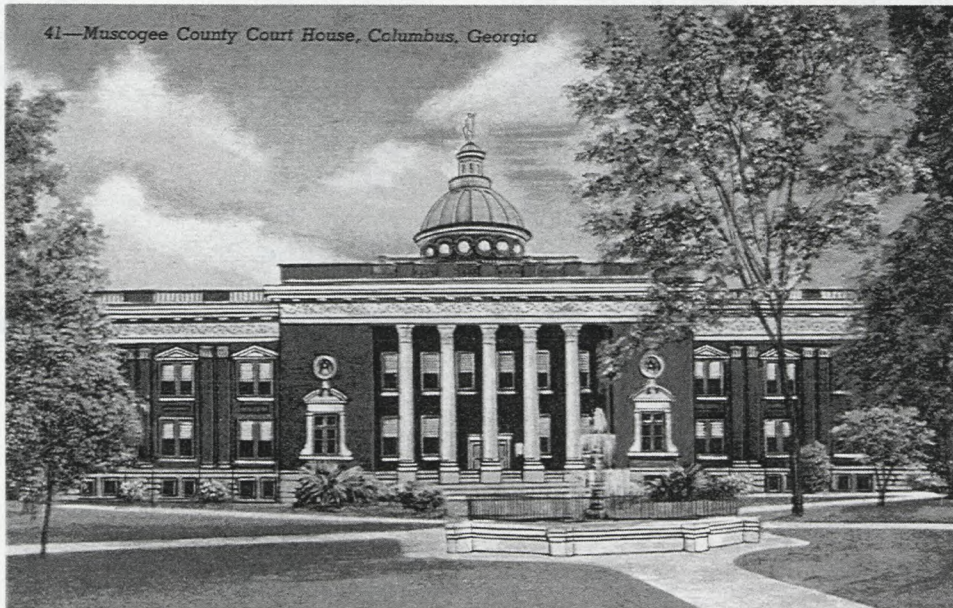
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